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THE SCRIPTURE DOCTRINE OF THE RESURRECTION
A CONSOLATION UNDER THE LOSS OF FRIENDS:

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S E R M O N,

P R E A C H E D A T

B U R Y I N L A N C A S H I R E,

N O V E M B E R 2, 1777,

O N O C C A S I O N O F T H E D E A T H O F

M R S. E L I Z A B E T H G R U N D Y,

A G E D T W E N T Y T H R E E Y E A R S.

B Y J O H N L U D D F E N N E R.

P U B L I S H E D A T T H E R E Q U E S T O F T H E M O U R N E R S.

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M D C C L X X V I I .



TO THE
MOURNING RELATIVES

OF
THE DECEASED,
THIS SERMON,

AS A TESTIMONY
OF
SYMPATHY AND AFFECTION,

IS
RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED

BY THE
AUTHOR.

TO THE
MOURNING RELATIVES



M O M

L H I S

AS A TESTIMONY

SYMPATHY AND AFFECTION

RESPECTFULLY INCLOSED

BY THE

A U T H O R

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A

FUNERAL SERMON.

1 THESSALONIANS iv. 16,

*For the Lord himself shall descend from
heaven with a shout, with the voice
of the Archangel and the trump of God;
and the dead in Christ, shall rise first.**

WHEN I look around on this
mourning audience, and
consider the melancholy e-
vent that hath brought me hither, I

* THESE words are what the deceased mentioned
as the subject of her Funeral Discourse.

participate your griefs, and would attempt to relieve the distress of your minds, by considering the present awful providence in the light of eternity. The most wise and holy government of God certainly has respect to a future state; and the text presents to us a scene, in which a harmony runs through all the divine dispensations, and this world and the other are both united.

I HOPE you, my friends, will upon this occasion afford me the most serious attention. And I desire to remind myself, that I am addressing immortal creatures, who, though now on their state of trial, may shortly be deprived of the means of grace, when eternal happiness, or everlasting woe, must be their lot.

As we see that others are called away on a sudden in every age of life, so we know not how long the trumpet of
the



the Gospel may be founded in our ears, or how soon the trumpet may be sounded to call us to judgment.

I CANNOT enter upon this subject, without begging your candour and indulgence; since the ideas before us overwhelm the mind; and the solemnities of judgment no person hath abilities thoroughly to represent.

IF we attentively consider the words, we shall find that the points of discourse are these three:

I. THE solemn apparatus of judgment, here spoken of.

II. THE revival of the dead.

III. THAT the "dead in Christ," shall rise first. — I shall afterwards subjoin a few reflections; with something

that may be an improvement of this event.

WE are, first, to consider the solemn apparatus of judgment here spoken of. That is expressed in these words, "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven, with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trump of God." O! what an assemblage of important and grand ideas!

First, it is specified, who it is by whom the judgment is to be conducted. Persons are concerned to know who is to be their judge. In matters of importance, a great deal depends upon this: as whether he have knowledge, be every other way qualified, and whether he have impartiality.

"CHRIST searcheth the hearts." He knoweth what is in man, and needeth not that any should inform him.
Now

Now this is a very great advantage; for he knows for himself; stands not in need of our confessions, to accuse us; stands not in need of the report of others. Of how great moment must this be, when the secrets of all hearts are to be judged! Our fellow-creatures may misconceive, or misinterpret our views; but he cannot: and our characters are fair or otherwise, by the principles, the governing principles, by which we have been actuated.

FURTHER, the Lord Jesus Christ is possessed of perfect goodness. He wisheth not to set any action in an unfavourable light. He can have no prejudice against any, having shewed his love in so many instances. We remember what a merciful Judge he was when here upon earth. And he hath carried the same tenderness with him into the heavens, as far as is consistent with justice. Nay, he is our intercessor,

for, and hath shed his blood for our
sakes, that he might be our Saviour.

WHICH leads me further to observe,
that the prevalence of his death, the
efficacy of his atonement, is that which
makes him worthy to judge the world.
“Worthy is he alone to receive the
book” of judgement, “and to open the
seals thereof, because he was slain,
and hath redeemed us to God by his
blood.”

AND there is some especial propriety
in our being judged by a man like our-
selves. It is observeable, that when
Christ is spoken of with reference to
judging the world, he is frequently
called “Man,” and “the Son of Man;”
(Luke xxi. 27. Acts xvii. 31. John v.
27. Matthew xvi. 27, &c.) doubtless
to denote the strict equity that will
be observed in all the divine proceedings.
While we live in this world, we live
under

under a dispensation which requires sincerity, instead of perfect righteousness; and we shall be judged by one, who knows our infirmities, and knows how to make all suitable allowances for us.

IT is for this reason, that he is appointed the judge of quick and dead: and his people can have no objection to receive judgment from his hands; for he who has been their Saviour is their Judge.

BUT the man Christ Jesus shall not appear in that low and humble form, as when he walked about the streets of Jerusalem; when he was without "comeliness," and had nothing for which we "should desire him."

HIS appearance, and his attendants, will be infinitely different. His appearance will be answerable to the nature of the work, and the embassy on which he

he comes. His heralds and attendants will be the holy angels. Behold, "the Son of Man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him".

THERE will be not only the glory of the Son, but of the Father also; and that which the high-priest took for blasphemy shall be verified*.—What an amazing effulgence of glory will then shine forth, enough to astonish and overwhelm all creatures!

HAVING considered the person, by whom the world is to be judged; we next observe, that "the trumpet will sound, and the dead be raised".

THIS is a figurative expression, and probably means no more, than the sound that will proceed from the arch-angel's voice, which will pierce the habitations of the dead. But it implies the facility,

* Mark xiv. 61, 62,

with

with which this will be done. Just as the trumpet calls men together, so easily will the power of God, raise the dead out of their graves ; of which, the trumpet is but the sign or emblem.

CAN we think of this day, as certain and real, without some of those emotions that will then affect us ? *We*, assuredly, must see the Son of Man coming to judgment, and at the moment in which this trumpet sounds, (when we have been for ages dead) must start from our graves. We, and all our friends, must have part in the triumphs, or condemnation of that day.

As it will not be wandering from my subject, I shall take occasion to observe what there is in the thoughts of judgment, to take away our painful apprehensions and excessive sorrows, upon the loss of our friends : for the scripture often describes judgment in connexion

nexion with mortality, as that which is to give the most effectual relief under it. And the apostle, a few verses after the text, having presented us with the doctrine of the resurrection, says "wherefore comfort one another with these words."

Now the thoughts of judgment, as it has been described, may be a means of relieving the mind, by diverting its attention. For it is the most important object with which we can converse. We have lost our friends, but that is a *temporal* grief. I may be affected with that loss, but have I nothing else to consider? Should I not consider, how near I stand to the judgment-seat of God?

If we direct our thoughts into this channel, it will turn them from a topic of fruitless melancholy.

It

IT has been very commonly observed in this connexion, if we had to prepare for an earthly assize, and the case were for life, it would almost take up the whole of our thoughts. In this situation, many losses might befall us, and we should attend to none of them.

THE grand scenes of the gospel, are no doubt represented, to raise us above the present world. If we believe in a judgment, we should be almost continually meditating upon it. At least, the scripture supposes this to be the case.

AGAIN, Have we lost our friends? judgment is our relief, for at judgment they shall be made unspeakably happy. But I desire it to be taken notice of, that I speak of *good* friends; those, to whom the tenor of this discourse may be applied. Now what can we desire more for them, than their final salvation? Their virtue shall be made clear,
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and be illustrated. And can we not take pleasure, that their endeared names, shall be mentioned with honour; and that, Christ being the final judge, they shall meet with a particular approbation from him, of which perhaps otherwise we might think, only our partiality had made them worthy? In other words, that which makes the saints joyful, should make us so. And the distance of the scene which I have been describing is nothing, for every man's death is his particular judgment. *Wherefore*, comfort yourselves with these words.

WE should also think of the cares and complaints of good men, in respect to their bodies, while they were able to preserve them. "In this we groan earnestly, says the Apostle, desiring to be cloathed upon, with our house which is from heaven." And again, "We that are in this tabernacle do groan, being

being burdened, not for that we would be unclothed, (i. e. divested of all body) but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life." And lastly, "ourselves also, which have the first fruit of the spirit, groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of the body." What a welcome messenger then is death, who comes to deliver them from their bondage of corruption, and to raise them to the glorious liberty of the children of God!

BUT let us realize the thought, secondly, of the revival of the dead.

THIS is that which our Lord's descending from heaven, with the trumpet of the Archangel is to introduce. "All that are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and come forth, they that have done good to the resurrection of life, and they that do evil to the resurrection of condemnation."

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have done evil to the resurrection of condemnation." There will be convulsions in nature, as if to be delivered of its burden. Our Lord hath given us specimens how this will be, by what happened at his crucifixion. Then there were earthquakes, "and the graves were opened, and many bodies of the saints which slept, arose, and went into the city." But now, all who have had part in mortality, will be collected together. There will be a general rendezvous of all mankind. The stately and the meaner tomb shall give up their dead. The righteous and the wicked must obey the voice, and come to judgment.

WHAT an important force, what an awful weight should this give to the means of grace, while they are continued to us! O that we had language to address you according to what your sensations will then be! How will holiness then look

look, compared with sin? Resisting temptation, compared with yielding to it? How will it look then, to have nobly conquered by self-denial, or to have meanly yielded through self-indulgence? Heaven, hell, this world and the other, the gospel promise and invitation, and the excuses, shifts and evasions we have used; how will they then look, either to the wise christian or the awakened sinner? For want of living under the influence of this fore-sight, some have slept under the most affecting calls of the Gospel, until they awaked at once in the utmost confusion. Now is the time to consider these things, if we will be in earnest. It is not when we awake in the confusion of judgment, that we can prepare for it.

LET us once more repeat the words,
 "For the Lord himself shall descend
 from heaven with a shout, with the
 voice of the Archangel and the trump

of God"—AND THE DEAD IN CHRIST SHALL RISE FIRST."

THIS is mentioned as a distinguishing part of their happiness.

THERE is no more ambiguity in the term, "The dead in Christ," than in who are they that live to Christ. For they that live to the Lord, shall die in him. They are such as have believed in Christ, received his revelation, and obeyed his laws. They are such as are interested in the covenant by Christ: and their names and their persons are known to Christ. They are such as are not blotted from his memory, by being among the dead.

To this purpose God is represented, as keeping a book of account who are his people, "And they shall be mine faith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare

spare them as a man spareth his own son that serveth him."

BUT it is said, that "the dead in Christ shall rise first." This refers to those who should be found alive, and be merely changed at our Lord's coming. That these latter shall have no pre-eminence in entering earlier on a state of happiness. But it is a thought equally just, that the RIGHTEOUS shall rise first, i. e. before those of the opposite character. That their sentence shall be passed before the conflagration of the world, and the condemnation of the wicked. This is a merciful circumstance; as it may relieve them from much painful anxiety, and being clothed with resurrection-bodies, they will doubtless be raised above human weakness—of which that may be a part; our being affected with the misery of so great a proportion of human creatures. This order of the procedure in

judgment, that my text speaks of, agrees with what is said in other parts of Scripture, (the first Psalm, the twenty-fifth of Matthew, &c.) and with what is said of their being caught up to meet the Lord in the air, being assessors with Christ in judgment, and joining their plaudit, saying, "Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints."

THE text speaks so fully of the resurrection, that I cannot help adding something to what I have already said on the improvement to be made in the resurrection-body. It is mentioned always as a great comfort to christians, that their body is to be raised; which it could not be, if it was to be like this present body. No ach nor pain, nor any of the infirmities of the flesh shall take place amongst the ranks of the blessed. Perfect health and vigour will
appear

appear in their countenances, and no gout nor stone, nor torturing or pining sickness, shall ever attend them.

THERE are yet some particular concerns that trouble the good man, from the present temperature of the body.

NOT, that the body should stand in need of meats and drinks, but that it should be the occasion of so many temptations; and that we should be soon weary in the service of God! To remove these painful uneasinesses, we are told that our flesh is to be raised a spiritual as well as an immortal body.

How glorious will the resurrection day be to good men, and what an addition may then be expected to their former happiness!

I FIND myself now brought to the improvement of the subject.

Gift. LET me lead you to reflect, where shall the sinner stand in judgment?

"I saw," says St. John, "a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face, the earth and the heaven fled away," the rocks and the mountains will melt away, incapable to support the convulsions, with which they shall be shaken. The convulsions of nature, the sun growing dim, and universal horror spreading all around you, are but a faint picture of that man's mind, whom judgment shall find without hope in God.

BOLD and impenetrable is the heart of the sinner! You believe in a judgment to come; and does it not affect you? Shall you be able to sustain the terrors of that day? Consider how different will be the appearance of the Saviour, from what it was before. That
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he comes with no messages of pardon, and of peace in his mouth, but to render "indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that doth evil, upon the Jew first, and also upon the Gentile."

2dly. LET us be thankful for the discoveries of the gospel, which open to us the bright prospect of eternal life; which assure us of the resurrection of the body. For besides the other light and glory thrown upon a future state, the doctrine of the resurrection of the body, is only to be found in revelation. It is that which the heathens had no idea of. They ridiculed the notion. But they were "ignorant of the power of God," i. e. knew not the purpose, to which, in forming a heavenly body, it would be applied. Let any person read the fifteenth chapter of the first epistle to the Corinthians, which contains the doctrine entertained by believers

lievers on this head, and ridicule the notion if he can. Say, if such a body as that there spoken of, be not a ground of hope. I have shown, in the case of the loss of our friends, what a noble consolation this is.

I MUST here say something of that excellent person, whose death we so justly lament. I am incapable to draw the picture, answerable to the idea of my own mind, and if I was *less* a friend might be more credited.

I CANNOT single out particular parts of her character, I know not in what amiable disposition, she most excelled, in what she was deficient. She was of a mild and religious disposition. She was remarkable for a sweetness of temper, which she carried with her to the last, and which discovered itself in all her trials. She minded less her own pains,

pains, than the pain that they gave to her friends.

SHE was eminent for her filial piety, and discovered those dispositions, which would have enabled her to fill up every relation. Her religious submission was never overcome. In a word, she gave bright evidences of being prepared for that world to which, with the highest reason, we believe she is gone.

MOURN not then, ye near and dear relatives. Ye know too well the value of christian consolations, and the circumstances in which they should be applied.

OH! It would have been the most painful part of this office, if standing up before her relations and friends, (myself her relation and friend) I could not have said that which justice hath now extorted.

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LET us see that we walk worthy of so good an example. Shall I here address myself to my young friends, those of her own acquaintance, those of her own age and sex? Imitate that which you saw lovely in her. It may be, you are apt to be proud of your persons and accomplishments: let this providence teach you a humble lesson. And remember from one instance, that religion will not make you dull and insipid; and therefore "remember your Creator in the days of your youth,"

I would close the subject with 3dly. reflecting on the vanity of every earthly hope.

FOR by attaching ourselves too strongly to the things of this life, man is exposed to disappointment and misery. But why should we misconceive of things, when we look around us, and see that nothing is constant, that nothing

thing can yield us entire happiness, and that if it could, it is taken away.

THIS scene should remind us of an early mortality.

How fond and vain are our imaginations, when we have seen others called away on a sudden from the early scenes of life, to promise *ourselves* a long continuance here ; whereas “ our breath is in our nostrils,” and nothing is more uncertain than life. O ! think of this, “ ye that say we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain.”

FURTHER, This scene may suggest to us, how soon our connexions may be broken. I am apt to say upon such an occasion as this, Lord ! what is our health ! What security have we for our possessions, or for any thing in this world ! The friends that we love, and that we place next our hearts, we love as if we
were

were to have them always. Very often, these hopes are the first to disappoint us. The design is, to draw our hopes to God. Let us remember the precarious tie by which we hold all things. The parent that smiles upon his child, should remember that it is a dying child. And it will be a happy use of the uncertainties of the present world, if by improving the temper of our minds, they make us better christians. This is the design of life being left so uncertain; and the wise governor of the world intends, that by the afflictions we here meet with, we should be awakened to ensure our everlasting inheritance.

In a word, our grand concern is to prepare for death, judgment, and the other world, that we may have part in a happy resurrection. God grant that by a holy life, and a sincere acceptance of the promises in Jesus Christ, we may be prepared for this event!—that when
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the " angel shall lift his hand and swear
that time shall be no longer," *that*
which shall be to other men a spectacle
of horror, may be to you a spectacle of
delight! Amen.

T H E E N D .

the "angel" shall be his hand and feet
that time shall be longer, that
which shall be a spectacle of
of horror, may be a spectacle of
delight! Amen.



THE END.